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Country: USSR

Subject: Propaganda in the Voronez Area re. the Constitutional Rights of Soviet Citizens.

Place Acquired: 50X1

Date Acquired:

Date of Info: Early May 53 50X1

Source:

1. "Some heckling incidents occurred in Voronez in early May 1953 during the mass meetings organized to prove the citizens' rights under Stalin's constitution.

2. "During 1-4 May 1953 Trade Union officials lectured kolkhoz workers on how the Soviet government guarantees the civil rights of its citizens. A huge poster placed in front of the Trade Union headquarters announced that 'The Soviet Constitution grants Soviet citizens freedom of speech, press and assembly, as well as personal freedom; it protects their work and grants them secrecy of correspondence.' Another banner, in front of the offices of the city committee of Voronez, declared that: 'Nobody can be deprived of personal freedom without a trial.' When similar declarations were made by a CP official, (fnu) Khitrov, during a mass meeting of about 20,000 kolkhoz and factory workers of the oblast, shouts could be heard in the huge audience asking about the fate of husbands and sons who had been arrested without specific reason or trial. The embarassed Party delegate advised appeal to the justice organs. When he was told that the arrests had been made by MVD organs, the confusion was covered by interrupting the 'discussion' with songs on the loudspeakers. Similar incidents were reported in the Voronez vicinity.

3. "It is estimated that over 4,800 prisoners [from the Voronez oblast???] are kept by the MVD. Most of them are kolkhoz workers arrested for spreading 'hostile rumors'. These prisoners are not embraced by the recent amnesty. Justice departments refuse any information about their fate."

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